



PEDRO E. SEGARRA
MAYOR

Testimony by the City of Hartford

Committee Bill No. 5143

**An Act Concerning The Municipal Option to Adopt Assessment Rates Limiting Property Tax Increases on Residential Properties
March 2, 2011, 10:30AM in Hearing Room 1C**

Chairmen Cassano and Gentile, Ranking Members Fasano and Aman, Vice Chairmen Coleman and Grogins and Distinguished Members of the Planning and Development Committee:

It is an honor to appear before you today to submit testimony on Committee Bill 5143, AAC *The Municipal Option to Adopt Assessment Rates Limiting Property Tax Increases on Residential Properties*.

This bill represents a mid-point in what has been a long, but productive and still ongoing process. This collaborative effort has brought together all relevant stakeholders, including the Metro Hartford Alliance, small and large business owners, residents and community activists. In particular, I want to thank those – including the legislative delegation; Oz Griebel and others from the Metro Hartford Alliance; and City Council members – who have been cordial, respectful and thoughtful throughout the process. There is no doubt that a productive and respectful dialogue has brought us to this point.

I have every expectation that this effort will continue as the City of Hartford seeks to identify a consensus agreement that, as best as possible, meets and balances the needs of residents and the business community.

There are several principles that I believe have universal agreement and will ideally represent the foundation of whatever solution is ultimately agreed to; they are:

1. Protection of residential taxpayers;
2. Relief and predictability for the business community; and
3. Recognition of the acute burden small business has had to bear.

It is my hope that our work with the above noted stakeholders will produce a long-term strategy and plan that would impact the mill rate, showing consistent year-over-year improvements in the business environment, demonstrate our committed effort to equalize the assessments for all categories of property, and a complete elimination of the commercial surcharge.

I personally want to thank Representatives Kirkley-Bey, Robles, Ritter and Roldan for their co-sponsorship of this bill. I am also grateful to this committee for raising and affording me the opportunity to offer testimony on Committee Bill 5143. While additional discussions on this issue will occur over the next several weeks, the City of Hartford urges your favorable consideration of this bill so that we may continue to work for a more equitable solution that meets the needs of all of Hartford's residents and taxpayers.

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